

HRIC Executive Committee

1/18/05

Meeting Notes

1) Tech Center Legislative Items - This year, these include categorical grants to the Regional Technical Centers that are proposed by DOE, supported by the Tech Directors and contained in the Governor's budget; maintaining the equipment fund at \$500,000, the program innovation fund at \$300,000, the Adult Technical Education fund at \$307,000. In addition, the Directors are seeking to establish a statewide calendar for all high schools so that tech students do not lose day of instruction due to scheduling conflicts. The Committee agreed that these investments are essential and should be supported.

2) DET/LI Merger and DET Re-Organization - Tom Douse reported that these are two separate issues. The merger is driven by a desire for more efficient program management and delivery, and will require legislative approval. That process is underway and is expected to be implemented over the next year. The new department will provide the same types of services. Funding for the various programs operated by these agencies is quite specific, and controlled by State and Federal laws and regulations, so individual program budgets will not be significantly different than they would be without the merger. Efficiencies are expected in areas like overhead, management, etc, and services to customers should be enhanced.

The DET reorganization of jobs and training programs is being driven primarily by significant cuts in Federal funds and would be necessary even without the merger. The details of these changes have been addressed in materials sent to all HRIC and WIB members over the past month. The primary strategy is to reduce overhead and facilities costs and to preserve direct customer service. Options are being explored for stationing staff on regular schedules in a greater number of locations, and to increase outreach to employers. Six regional offices will be established in place of the current 12 locations. Information about the changes and supporting data were provided to the Committee and are available from the DET Commissioner's office.

3) Review of Agenda for Thursday's Full Council Meeting - The agenda was reviewed. Lieutenant Governor Brian Dubie has agreed to introduce Dr. Stoltz and will be meeting with him on Thursday morning. Personalized letter of

invitation have gone out to all Legislators and personal contacts have been made with key Committee Chairs. The Challenge Statement will be distributed and feed-back and comments will be requested. The members will also be asked to consider key groups to whom the message needs to be delivered and to assist in this effort. A detailed agenda was mailed to all member, WIBs and other interested individuals last week.

4) Update on WIA Performance Incentives for DOE and DET programs - DET has reported that according to the latest communication DET will not qualify for incentives because of the way DOL has chosen to interpret the data. DET made the important program measures, and missed in only one area, the percentage of customer surveys returned. The survey responses were positive, however there were too few surveys returned to meet the goal. The DOE Perkins Vocational/Technical programs met the goals, and the results of the DOE Adult Education Programs are still being evaluated by U.S. DOE, however it appears that these programs will meet their goals. Unless US DOL can be persuaded to re-evaluate its decision and US DOE finalizes its measurement indices in a way that favors Vermont, we will not be receiving an incentive grant this year.

5) HRIC Chair discussion - Tom Leever was unable to attend this meeting, however he asked the members to consider their recommendation to the Governor for the HRIC Chair as his appointment expires this summer. Tom has indicated a willingness to continue to serve if the Council wishes to recommend him, and the Governor agrees, however he has suggested that a committee be formed to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee. It was agreed to send a letter to all members asking if they would like to serve on a "Chair" committee or to make any suggestions.

Other Business - The discussion of program measurement lead to a discussion about how individual progress can be tracked across multiple institutions and programs. Program management and improvement efforts have been compromised by a lack of outcome data. It appears that public schools may not be using social security numbers or other unique identifiers, making it impossible to track transitions to further education and work. DET now has extensive data on individual work histories that is based on SS numbers, however without a matching data base on public education, tracking student employment outcomes is impossible.